



U.S. FOOD & DRUG
ADMINISTRATION

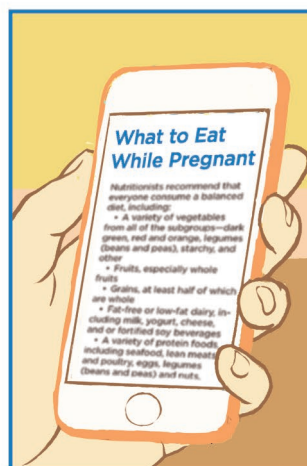
Eating Fish:

A Guide for Chinese American Families



Read Mei-ling's story to find out how important fish are as part of a healthy diet and for your child's growth and development and how you can eat fish while pregnant.

Mei-ling and Ming are enjoying an afternoon at home. Mei-ling has some great news!



Later that week, Mei-ling and Ming visit the doctor.

I love eating fish, but can I still eat it while I'm pregnant?

Absolutely! Fish are a source of protein, omega-3 fats, vitamins, and minerals. These nutrients are good for you and important for a child's growth and development, too.

Deciding which fish to eat doesn't have to be difficult or confusing. FDA and EPA have developed this chart that makes it so easy to choose what fish to eat. This advice supports recommendations of the 2015–2020 Dietary Guidelines for Americans, and it is simple to use. You can even take it with you when grocery shopping.

It's easy! Just eat 2 to 3 servings of fish per week from the Best Choices list, or, when you don't eat any of those, have 1 serving per week from the Good Choices list. There are so many choices! 90% of the fish eaten in the United States are listed in the Best Choices category.

See full advice on page 5.

How much is a serving?

The advice shows you that, too! A serving for an adult is 4 ounces—about the size of the palm of your hand.

And just be sure to avoid fish that are listed under the Choices to Avoid list, as they may contain high levels of mercury, which can be harmful to an unborn baby and young children. There are just a few of them.

What about dishes containing raw fish, like *yusheng*? Is it on the chart?

Raw fish is not recommended for pregnant women or young children. You can cook a variety of fish.

So, I can eat whatever cooked fish I want so long as I follow this chart?

Yes, absolutely! While it is important to limit mercury in your diet, many types of fish are both nutritious and lower in mercury. Remember to vary which types of fish you eat. Eating a variety of fish is important.

Mei-ling and Ming have brought their baby, Ethan, home! Mei-fen is helping Mei-ling during her month of recovery.

Here's something to eat.

Ji yu tang, my favorite! I want to eat this every week.



The chart your doctor gave you says to eat a variety of fish. Instead of *ji yu tang* every week, I can make you many others. I have recipes for whole grilled fish, and your chart shows so many fish to choose from! And how about *qing zheng yu*, too?



What kind?

Hei lu yu.

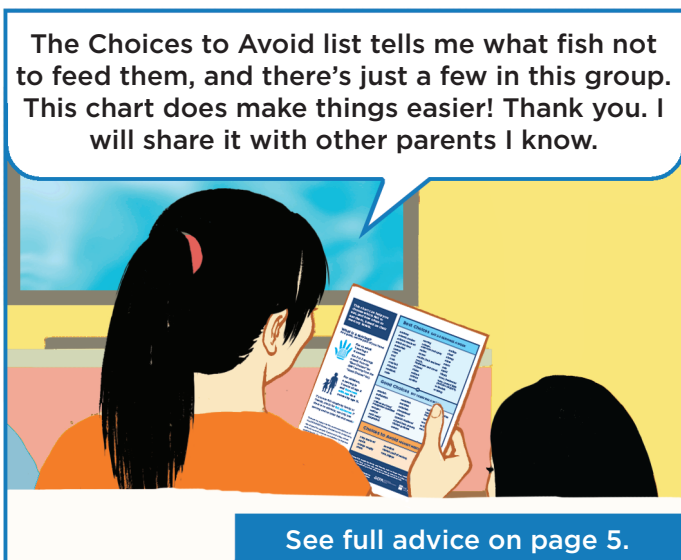


Okay, good. There are so many healthy ways of preparing fish, like grilling and steaming, so you can try a variety of fish cooked in many different ways!



That sounds great!

It's time for Ethan's full month ceremony already! Mei-ling's cousin, Cindy Lee, and her children are ready to celebrate.



For more information about FDA and EPA's fish advice for pregnant women and parents, visit www.fda.gov/fishadvice.

ADVICE ABOUT EATING FISH

For Women Who Are or Might Become Pregnant, Breastfeeding Mothers, and Young Children

Eating fish‡ when pregnant or breastfeeding can provide [health benefits](#).

Fish and other protein-rich foods have nutrients that can help your child's growth and development.

As part of a healthy eating pattern, eating fish may also offer heart health benefits and lower the risk of obesity.



Nutritional Value of Fish

The [2015-2020 Dietary Guidelines for Americans](#) recommends:

- At least 8 ounces of seafood (less for young children) per week based on a 2,000 calorie diet
- Women who are pregnant or breastfeeding to consume between 8 and 12 ounces of a variety of seafood per week, from choices that are lower in mercury.

Fish are part of a [healthy eating pattern](#) and provide:

- Protein
- Healthy omega-3 fats (called DHA and EPA)
- More vitamin B₁₂ and vitamin D than any other type of food
- Iron which is important for infants, young children, and women who are pregnant or who could become pregnant
- Other minerals like selenium, zinc, and iodine.

Choose a variety of fish that are lower in mercury.

([See chart on next page.](#))

While it is important to limit mercury in the diets of women who are pregnant and breastfeeding and young children, many types of fish are both nutritious and lower in mercury.

This advice supports the recommendations of the *2015-2020 Dietary Guidelines for Americans*, developed for people 2 years and older, which reflects current science on nutrition to improve public health. The *Dietary Guidelines for Americans* focuses on dietary patterns and the effects of food and nutrient characteristics on health. For advice about feeding children under 2 years of age, you can consult the [American Academy of Pediatrics](#) [↗](#).

‡ THIS ADVICE REFERS TO FISH AND SHELLFISH COLLECTIVELY AS "FISH" / ADVICE REVISED JULY 2019

This chart can help you choose which fish to eat, and how often to eat them, based on their mercury levels.

What is a serving?

As a guide, use the palm of your hand.



For an adult
1 serving =
4 ounces

Eat 2 to 3 servings a week from the “Best Choices” list (**OR** 1 serving from the “Good Choices” list).



For children,
a serving is
1 ounce at age 2
and increases
with age to 4
ounces by age 11.

If you eat fish caught by family or friends, check for [fish advisories](#). If there is no advisory, eat only one serving and no other fish that week.*

This advice supports the recommendations of the *2015-2020 Dietary Guidelines for Americans*, developed for people 2 years and older, which reflects current science on nutrition to improve public health. The *Dietary Guidelines for Americans* focuses on dietary patterns and the effects of food and nutrient characteristics on health. For advice about feeding children under 2 years of age, you can consult the [American Academy of Pediatrics](#)

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Best Choices EAT 2-3 SERVINGS A WEEK

| | | |
|-------------------|-----------------------|---------------------|
| Anchovy | Herring | Scallop |
| Atlantic croaker | Lobster, | Shad |
| Atlantic mackerel | American and spiny | Shrimp |
| Black sea bass | Mullet | Skate |
| Butterfish | Oyster | Smelt |
| Catfish | Pacific chub mackerel | Sole |
| Clam | Perch, | Squid |
| Cod | freshwater and ocean | Tilapia |
| Crab | Pickrel | Trout, freshwater |
| Crawfish | Plaice | Tuna, canned light |
| Flounder | Pollock | (includes skipjack) |
| Haddock | Salmon | Whitefish |
| Hake | Sardine | Whiting |

OR

Good Choices EAT 1 SERVING A WEEK

| | | |
|----------------------|----------------------|----------------------|
| Bluefish | Monkfish | Tuna, albacore/white |
| Buffalofish | Rockfish | tuna, canned and |
| Carp | Sablefish | fresh/frozen |
| Chilean sea bass/ | Sheepshead | Tuna, yellowfin |
| Patagonian toothfish | Snapper | Weakfish/seatrout |
| Grouper | Spanish mackerel | White croaker/ |
| Halibut | Striped bass (ocean) | Pacific croaker |
| Mahi mahi/ | Tilefish (Atlantic | |
| dolphinfish | Ocean) | |

Choices to Avoid HIGHEST MERCURY LEVELS

| | |
|---------------|---------------------------|
| King mackerel | Swordfish |
| Marlin | Tilefish (Gulf of Mexico) |
| Orange roughy | Tuna, bigeye |
| Shark | |

*Some fish caught by family and friends, such as larger carp, catfish, trout and perch, are more likely to have fish advisories due to mercury or other contaminants. State advisories will tell you how often you can safely eat those fish.

www.FDA.gov/fishadvice
www.EPA.gov/fishadvice

